

**Town of Bedford
Town Board Members
&
Bedford Recreation and Parks Advisory Committee**

**INVITE
BEDFORD RESIDENTS
TO ATTEND A PRESENTATION &
PUBLIC FORUM ON THE**

**PROPOSED
KATONAH MEMORIAL PARK
FAMILY BIKE AREA**

**A VIDEO IS AVAILABLE AT
bikekatonah.org**

*presented by
David Bradford
David Klagsbrun
Jeff Tannenbaum
Robert Siegel*

at the Katonah Public Library

April 19th at 7 PM

***a follow-up “Site Walk” event
will meet at the Paddle Tennis Courts
on April 23rd at 3 PM***

***To view our video and proposal, visit
bikekatonah.org***

We encourage you to visit our contact page and share your questions and comments.

Community Proposal

bikekatonah.org

click the link to view the video

Public Meeting April 19th

at the

Katonah Village Library Meeting Room



Prepared for the Town of Bedford
Town of Bedford Parks & Recreation Advisory Board,
the Katonah Memorial Park Association,
and the community of Katonah, NY

The Proposal:

- Create a safe, traffic free place for local kids and families to ride their bicycles.
- Collaborate with the Katonah Memorial Park Association to design a family bike area that fits with the natural aesthetic of the Katonah Memorial Park.



"Go outside and play!"

- Ancient parental wisdom

"My son loves riding his bike but after getting side swiped by a car on his way to school he's reluctant to ride on the streets. A bike park that's separate from traffic is the perfect solution for safely getting kids back on their bikes and out into nature!"

Julia K, Katonah resident

"When we moved to Katonah Village, we thought that it would be a great, safe place for our kids to ride bikes. Unfortunately, between the steep hills and the many sidewalks which end abruptly, we do not feel confident allowing them to bike. A bike park would be such a welcome addition to the town's many family-friendly attractions."

Mary Ann D, Katonah resident

What is a Family Bike Area?

- **Over the past decade, hundreds of bike parks have been created across the US to get children back on their bikes in a car free environment.**
- **Bike parks are designed to be riding areas that are removed from traffic, providing a safe learning environment for cyclists and a fun & challenging recreational feature for entire families. They are typically designed to be used by riders of all ages, and have smooth, natural dirt/clay surfaces so children with training wheels can learn on them as well.**

"Cycling is a lifetime sport."

Once you learn, you never forget.

Did you know?

In most municipalities it's illegal to ride a bicycle on the sidewalk. Between increased traffic as a commuter town, and justifiable ordinances, meant to keep pedestrians safe, we tend to make it more difficult for children to do what most adults took for granted, in their own youth. The Family Bike Area, in the Katonah Memorial Park will be a safe, fun, beautifully landscaped place for kids to ride and learn to ride their bikes.

Objectives and Benefits

The initial idea for a family bike park area and adjacent small trails in Katonah Memorial Park was born out of a desire to get kids and families outdoors more. As we researched the concept, the list of benefits to our families and community grew considerably. They include:

- o **Health, Wellness & Access to Nature**
- o **Safety**
- o **Local Family Activity & Inclusivity**
- o **Community Hub & Community Project**
- o **Valuable way to teach a “lifetime” skill.**
- o **Non-competitive Sport Based Activity**
- o **Alternative to Video Games & Social Media**

Something to consider...



Cycling is a healthy way for families to strengthen bonds.

- 62% of children aged 9-13 do not participate in any organized physical activity during their non-school hours, and 23% do not engage in any freetime physical activity (Center for Disease Control).
- Outdoor play increases fitness levels and builds active, healthy bodies, an important strategy in helping one in three American kids who are obese get fit.
- Spending time outside raises levels of Vitamin D, helping protect children from future bone problems, heart disease, diabetes and other health issues.
- Exposure to natural settings may be widely effective in reducing ADHD symptoms.
- Nature makes you nicer, enhancing social interactions, value for community and close relationships.
- Children's stress levels fall within minutes of seeing green spaces.

Safety

The Katonah Memorial Park Family Bike Park Area will be a safe – car free – place to ride

There are very few local safe cycling opportunities for kids and families

Over the past 30 years, increased car sizes and population densities have combined to make cycling a considerably more dangerous activity

Approximately 10 cyclists are injured every month in traffic accidents in Westchester

A safe place for young riders to learn handling skills and develop a lifelong desire to spend time out of doors in the healthy activity of cycling

Local Family Activity & Inclusivity

The family bike park area will be an easy, local way for families to interact together

It will appeal to a wide range of ages and skill levels

Community Hub & Community Project

The family bike park area will serve as a hub for the Katonah community

A meeting place for families

An additional launching point for enjoying the Katonah Memorial Park

Building and maintaining the bike park will be a community activity. This will be in partnership with Bedford Parks & Recreation Department. Community involvement has been a key ingredient to success of family bike parks. Participants would include:

Families, the John Jay High School Bike Team, Boy Scouts and others as volunteers

Non-competitive Sport Based Activity

Provides an alternative activity for kids who are not engaged in organized sports

It provides a healthy alternative to video games & social media

Site Variables

These are a number of the key elements when choosing a site:

- **Safety** – design & signage
- **Access** – easy bike and vehicle access
- **Parking** (though most may ride to it) – no additional parking required. Encourages biking to the park to reduce parking.
- **Drainage** – designed with storm water drainage assessment
- **Minimal site preparation** – open space portion of bike park area less than 1 acre
- **Level Ground** (moderate hills are fine) – minimal site preparation required
- **Environmental impact** – professional assessment
- **Aesthetic** – comply with existing park aesthetic, well maintained landscape
- **Privacy residents** (will not disturb) – set back from neighborhood, doesn't disturb surrounding homeowners
- **Adjacent trail opportunities** – contiguous to secluded wooded trail system. Ability to strengthen a respectful trail ethic, where cyclists yield to walkers, dog-walkers and joggers.



The Family Bike Area

NOTE: This is a very preliminary concept drawing, intended only to show the various components of the project. The design will be in keeping with the character of the Katonah Memorial Park.



Components

What in the world is a “Pump Track”?

- o **Pump Track** - This is the central/most important and typically most used component and is a landscape design that uses terrain features such as berms and undulations to help propel a cyclist. They are typically designed as directional dirt pathways in loops with small rollers and banked turns. This area will (with the Strider Track) fit inside about an acre.
- o **Strider Learning Area** - This is a small beginner area, frequently a loop, that is typically adjacent to the pump track and for kids who are learning to bike. It is analogous to a “kiddie pool”.
- o **Adjacent Trails** - These are dirt trails that are adjacent to the pump track/strider learning area and define the boundary.

Katonah Memorial Park

The Site

The Grove

- ✓ Easy access for cyclists
- ✓ Safe, under-utilized area
- ✓ Good drainage
- ✓ Level - minimal site preparation
- ✓ Private, set back from neighbors
- ✓ Minimal environmental impact
- ✓ Adjacent to parking

Tennis Courts

Pool

The Grove
Proposed
Bike Area

Paddle Tennis
Picnic Shelter

Parking

Razor Field

Wildwood Road

Safety in the Bike Park Area

- **#1 OBJECTIVE IS TO HAVE A SAFE BIKE PARK AREA**
- **Steps to ensure safety include thorough risk management planning**
Proper Site Design and Professional Construction
Maintenance plan and protocol.
- **International Mountain Biking Association (“IMBA”) standards for design, build, and maintenance** IMBA has set the standard for cycling and trail safety.
- **Follow regular maintenance protocols and inspections**
Partner with the Town with respect to all labor and safety protocols
- **Clear and abundant signs, with established rules**
Promote bicycle safety, helmet use and respectful riding culture.



Clear signs create respectful track culture.



Examples of bike area signs and established IMBA rules.

Family Bike Park Area Rules:

1. **All riders must wear a helmet!**
2. Open to **Town of Bedford** residents.
3. All forms of biking are potentially dangerous and your risk increases in special areas such as this containing enhanced terrain and technical features.
4. Features in this area include bermed turns and rollers. Ride within your abilities. Progress slowly.
5. Always pay attention to your own safety, and be courteous and aware of other riders. Ride within your limits and ability. Children under 8 must be supervised by an adult.
6. Do not ride when muddy or when raining.
7. Respect hours and closure times. No riding after daylight hours.
8. Report any maintenance needs or dangerous conditions to Park Staff.
9. **Riders must yield to pedestrians and smaller riders. Respect all Park users.**

Maintenance

Maintenance begins with design and construction, requiring the experience of a professional track and trail builder, throughout the entire process. Because we live in the north-east, normal ground freeze, in addition to usage will require a structured maintenance protocol.

- **Professional Plan** – family bike park area designer creates detailed maintenance plan. The plan is developed with respect to Town of Bedford labor and safety protocols.
- **Public/private partnership** – from our discussions, the most successful family bike park areas have the trail maintenance done as a collaboration between a group of volunteer “trail wardens” who are committed to the bike park area and the Town Parks & Recreation Department.
 - o **Westchester Mountain Biking Association (“WMBA”)** has agreed to assist and ensure International Mountain Biking Association standards, with local Trail Wardens as trained WMBA members.
- **Scheduled Maintenance** – semi-annual planned maintenance should be scheduled though the clay material means low maintenance.
- **Safety/inspection protocols** - done in conjunction with the Town Parks & Recreation Department.

Aesthetic

In keeping with the beautiful, natural aesthetic of this part of the Katonah Memorial Park, the landscaping will utilize natural ground cover and leaf fall for empty spaces. Native plants, like ferns and moss can be planted to minimize erosion, improve drainage and eliminate the need for grass cutting, or weed eating. Placement of native plants also minimizes off-course impact. The remaining canopy of native hardwoods further protect the area and clay surface of the pump track. Track culture will encourage a “Leave No Trace” environmental ethic in users.



Risk Management

- **Key Factors**
 - Biking areas – covered under general insurance policies that cover ball fields, swimming pools, etc.
 - Maintenance protocols – clear maintenance and inspection protocol established between town parks & recreation department and volunteer WMBA “Trail Wardens.”
- **Risk management analysis based upon discussions with people who oversee the following parks:**
 - Superintendent of Parks, Village of Scarsdale
 - Superintendent, Yorktown Parks & Recreation Department
 - Director, Westchester County Parks, Recreation & Facilities
 - Superintendent of Parks, Town of Huntington
 - Head of Parks, Wilmington, NY
 - Director, Eagle -Vail Bike Park

Construction Process

Time

- We have been advised that construction would take between 5 and 10 days
- This will vary based upon complexity and existing shape of site
- If approved, we would hope to initiate a process so the facility would be enjoyed by summer, if in any way possible.

Designers/Builders

- There are a handful of designers/builders that have worked in the NY metropolitan area. We have received references on many of them.
- Designer/builder designs the terrain, prepares the schematics, and would be on-site through construction.
- Designer/builder would also author the maintenance plan and would be engaged to make periodic site visits.

Materials

- The primary materials used to build bike parks are high quality clay and soil.
- The construction is landscape architectural. There are no impervious surfaces.
- Native plants for “off-limits” spaces between paths. Some mulch.

Costs

- The preliminary cost estimates are as follows:
 - o Presentations/drawings \$1,500
 - o Clay/fill \$5,000
 - o Safety Signage \$1,500
 - o Labor/machinery (5-7 days) \$11,000 - \$15,000

Total \$19,000 - \$23,000
Cushion ~20% \$23,000 - \$30,000

Fundraising

- o We envision raising 100% of the construction costs through a grass roots capital campaign – no cost to taxpayers
- o We will schedule an open house/ Kickstarter campaign upon project approval.

Benefits to the Community

- Traffic free riding environment
- Inclusive, for all ages & skill levels
- Safe area to teach cycling fundamentals
- It's family friendly, outdoor fun.
- Health and Wellness. Cardio. Core.
- Teaches & improves coordination & balance
- Community hub
- Community building project
- Cultivates independence; a valuable lifelong skill
- Cross train opportunity for all athletes
- Healthy alternative to organized sports
- Positive alternative to electronics & TV
- Gets families outdoors, together
- Quality of place infrastructure

These are your children's "good ol' days!"
Let's make them something to remember.

bikekatonah.org

